

## *Planning Amherst Together*

### Summary of Input from Community Questionnaire

REVISED: August 24, 2005

**Method of distribution:** Questionnaire was mailed to all members of Town Meeting, mailed to all members of Town boards and commissions, made available with posted notices & drop boxes at all three public libraries, and posted on the Town website.

**Number responses received as of 8/16/05:** 129, 5 of which do not follow the questionnaire's format

**Question format and resulting analysis method:** All questions were "open-ended", encouraging each respondent to write in answers in own words. This summary groups responses to highlight the patterns of responses.

**Question #1: "What's the most important thing an Amherst Master Plan should accomplish?"**

<b>Response Cluster</b> with types of responses included [ <i>&amp; notes from Jeanne</i> ]	<b>Number responses</b>	<b>% of total</b>
<b>Through good process generate a plan/shared vision/road map</b> that people agree on, helps make decisions, is truly representative, reflects shared values, brings people together, comes from process that includes those usually not heard-from [especially those with most needs, those cut off by language barriers]	41	31.8
<b>Create land use plan</b> for balanced, viable combination of land uses [e.g. open space with housing, conservation with tax base], that prepares Amherst to manage growth. Includes requests to keep green/village atmosphere, and to promote or protect neighborhood, village, Downtown character. [Note: respondents in this cluster vary as to which land use merits most attention.]	35	27.1
<b>Preserve open space</b> including agriculture, wildlife habitat, "green feel" [ <i>Note distinction between this cluster and the preceding one, which includes responses that speak of open space in the context of other land uses.</i> ]	15	11.6
<b>Deal with housing:</b> where should housing construction be allowed, need housing that low to moderate income people can afford, no more \$million homes, define what "affordable" is so people really understand and know whether they truly want it.	11	8.5
<b>Improve business base:</b> be more business-friendly, attract clean industry, make it easier to start a business, expand tax base, lower residential taxes	7	5.4
<b>Address need for and impact of Town services:</b> quality schools, cultural & arts programs for schools, cap expenditures, don't increase parking fees	6	4.7
<b>Increase transportation alternatives:</b> reduce number of cars, more pedestrian-friendly	4	3.1
<b>Reduce use of fossil fuel and emissions</b> including changes in people's behavior, e.g. e-commuting with work stations at home	4	3.1
<b>Create vibrant, viable Downtown</b>	3	2.3
<b>Other:</b> greater happiness for locals; increase tourism	2	1.6
<b>No answer</b>	1	0.8

**Question #2: “What questions would you ask Amherst residents, to help plan for the future?”**

*[Note from Jeanne: There are hundreds of questions. I will try to provide a useful grouping that doesn't lose the flavor of responses. Responses to this question will be referenced in my memo of recommendations regarding the Master Plan Survey]*

**Question #3a: “What brought you to Amherst?”**

<b>Response Cluster</b> and types of responses included	<b>Number responses</b>	<b>% of total</b>
<b>UMass or one of the colleges</b> overwhelmingly, it was UMass	<b>51</b>	<b>39.5</b>
<b>Type of place, community:</b> people, landscape, community life, refuge from bigotry, social attitudes	<b>21</b>	<b>16.3</b>
<b>Family reasons:</b> born here, married here, spouse's job <i>[spouses' employers not specified, possibly includes some who worked for a college or the UMass]</i>	<b>19</b>	<b>14.7</b>
<b>Public schools</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8.5</b>
<b>Relatively affordable to buy or rent home</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>Local employment or own business:</b> employers not specified	<b>4</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>Chose to retire here</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2.3</b>
<b>Co-housing</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>No answer</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11.6</b>

**Question #3b: “Why did you choose to stay here?”**

<b>Response Cluster</b> and types of responses included	<b>Number responses</b>	<b>% of total</b>
<b>People and cultural activities:</b> friendly, educated, liberal, leftist, diverse, educated, level of community involvement, can make a difference in the town, friends are here <i>[includes one who says that is area that attracted, not Amherst specifically]</i>	<b>40</b>	<b>31.0</b>
<b>Rural beauty and cultural vibrancy combined:</b> small town that offers a lot; multitude of diverse cultural offerings in a rural setting; beautiful landscape; proximity to Boston, NYC, Berkshires, seashores numerous social services not usually found in small town, ethnic diversity in small town <i>[includes one who says that is area that attracted, not Amherst specifically]</i>	<b>35</b>	<b>27.1</b>
<b>Ownership, location of home:</b> love house, neighborhood., co-housing	<b>12</b>	<b>9.3</b>
<b>Family, friends, “roots”</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7.0</b>
<b>May not choose to stay or be able to stay:</b> rising costs [4], lack of employment opportunity [1]; dissatisfaction with new arrivals [2] and 1 with the following: “I have encountered a stagnant town center with enormous potential, \$350,000 1950s and 1960s postwar ranch houses, miles of powerlines, 40 mph streets with no sidewalks, and a community frozen by fear of growth.”	<b>8</b>	<b>6.2</b>
<b>UMass</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>Chose to retire here:</b> good senior services, “living in Amherst is like being at summer camp all year long”	<b>4</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>No answer</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12.4</b>

**Question #4: “What 3 changes would make daily life here more enjoyable or successful?”**

<b>Response cluster</b>	<b># Responses</b>	<i>Starts on page . . .</i>
<b>Traffic/transportation/circulation [in general or specific outside Town Center]</b>	<b>76</b>	<i>3</i>
<b>Town Center [including circulation]</b>	<b>65</b>	<i>5</i>
<b>Town services, costs, taxes</b>	<b>53</b>	<i>8</i>
<b>Business/employment</b>	<b>34</b>	<i>10</i>
<b>Community life</b>	<b>26</b>	<i>10</i>
<b>Colleges/University</b>	<b>18</b>	<i>11</i>
<b>Housing</b>	<b>16</b>	<i>12</i>
<b>Town government &amp; community decision-making</b>	<b>18</b>	<i>13</i>
<b>Pace, location, type of development</b>	<b>7</b>	<i>13</i>
<b>Natural resource &amp; open space protection</b>	<b>5</b>	<i>14</i>
<b>Other</b>	<b>13</b>	<i>14</i>
<b>No answer</b>	<b>6</b>	

Traffic, circulation, transportation [general or outside Town Center]

*[Total: 76. Includes public transit, bike lanes/paths, sidewalks/trails, traffic flow & calming]*

Transformation of the transportation culture: fewer cars/more restrictions on cars, more respect for and encouragement of bicycling and bicyclers, greater investment in community-based solutions including public transportation and vehicles-sharing

Less cars!

Fewer cars – more pedestrian, bikes, etc.

Greater bus and bicycle use

More bike paths, the existing Norwottuck is a great example, it is super to have

Divert and/or discourage “thru “ traffic

Less traffic and/or better traffic management; better/more bicycle lanes/bike paths. Carpooling and encourage more use of public transport. Better public transit. Measures for slowing traffic, not just in town center. Safe bike path to town from many areas [116 is not safe for kids] 6

Drastically lower parking meter fees and withdraw 30% of existing meters.

Better enforcement of handicap parking spots both public and private [as authorized by Town Meeting].

Currently enforcement on private property appears to be minimal or nonexistent. [If data exists to prove me wrong, I would love to see it.]

Repaint the bike lanes regularly on all streets and mark a bike lane on every street.

Improved public transportation

More public transportation, fewer cars, then more public transportation, and then fewer cars

Less traffic and slower traffic would make walking and bicycling around town much more pleasant.

Extended sidewalks and trails enabling pedestrian access from and to anywhere

Intervillage public transit loop with frequent service

Delivery service for groceries and other locally-purchased goods. [in context of other traffic-reducing suggestions]

Sidewalks and bike lanes

More bike lanes, connectors from the bike path to commercial areas like the Hadley malls.

Extended and more frequent bus service.

For people less fortunate than I have been, a flexible transportation system, say a fleet of privately-owned vans running on fixed route, fixed rates, and fixed schedules.

Traffic control – better public transit

As part of master planning, develop a town trails plan to encourage more walking, bike riding, and other alternatives

Mass transportation

Have better public transit services: more hours of operation, shorter times between runs, and great access to other communities, including Deerfield, Greenfield, and Springfield. Have a dedicated source of funding for transit so that services are not constantly threatened by town and state budget shortfalls

Improve public transit system.

A smoother flow of traffic through Amherst Center and along Route 9, esp. toward the bridge

Other than more public transportation, I like Amherst as it is.

Mass transit [bus] to Greenfield that didn't take an hour

Reestablish the free bus system

Traffic planning and patterns that related flow, uses and community needs, specifically student travel routes, commercial deliveries, satellite parking and public transportation sufficiently comprehensive to serve most of the citizens and students.

Traffic calming in conjunction with improved mass transit and bicycling infrastructure improvements. This would result in reduced parking needs

Lower speed limits.

More bikeways for people to ride bikes.

Traffic calming efforts

Better more comprehensive bus service

A rail line to Boston

Reduce and control traffic [amount of, and speed of] in all parts of town

More sidewalks

All year round bus system

More bicycle lanes and paths

Reduced cars/parking lots/speed

Friendlier to pedestrians

Less traffic through town [especially on East Pleasant St. which we live on, and it is overrun with traffic day and night]

More east-west roads, or better traffic management. Traffic can be a real problem.

Make streets more bicycle-friendly

A bypass [preferably around the north side of Amherst] that would connect with a new bridge over the river and with Interstate 91. Amherst has relatively good "flow" north and south through town, but the east-west flow is terrible. It should be the opposite; Amherst is a long, narrow, north-and-south rectangle. But only Pine Street, Main/Amity, Route 9, and Bay Road provide mobility east and west. And Route 9 is clogged with traffic. Much of it is simply passing through to get to the interstate. I know Amherst businesses would howl if potential shoppers were diverted around the town, but just don't need drive-through traffic.

Moving through traffic away from the center of town.

All street continue to be passable

Sidewalks kept in repair

Better bus service, maybe mini-buses

More pedestrian friendly

Get a traffic light at the Atkins-Hampshire corner before someone dies. It is much better having one at Pomeroy and at entrance to Echo Hill.

Improve public transportation

Planning for the years to come will require more public transportation for seniors. Either more jitneys for milistreet [sic] coverage or more van services. This would also ease incompetent drivers out of their cars

Improved transportation and related changes that go with them, i.e. sidewalks for walking and biking

Traffic calming: slower speed limits, traffic barriers for certain streets, more crosswalks like the ones Amherst College put in

Better sidewalks along Strong Street so one could walk there without risk

Public transport along Strong Street to town center

More attention to traffic flow. Bikes are great, but the reality of the broad spread of where people live makes bike lanes extremely difficult and in conflict with heavy traffic. Bikes are not a big help much of the year, on hills, and for elderly, families, and shopper

Painting lane markings on North Pleasant, Meadow Street, Pine Street, and East Pleasant Streets in north Amherst. Many cars, walkers and bikers use these streets, sometimes late at night.

Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists obeying the rules of the road.

More bike-friendly roads – more of a pedestrian/bike presence

Pendicabs [sic] in the summer; similar vehicles in the winter

More bike lanes, better public transportation, less polluting buses, year-round bus routes.

Would like to take a bus from S. Amherst to Center and back on a regular basis with frequent buses. I think it is difficult to learn the bus routes.

Creating more hiking paths and sidewalks - in fact creating a model town for these alternative transportation modes – the bus system is already a plus.

Re-build the trolley system

Reduction of automotive traffic and enhancement of pedestrian zones

It would be nice to be able to walk or bike to do grocery shopping in town. This is especially hard for students without cars

Better paved roads

Cameras on all traffic lights to stop the amazing amount of traffic violations I see every day.

A built in and permanent infrastructure of walking, hiking, and biking paths that reach almost every corner of the town.

A trolley line or trolley bus running north and south every half hour through Amherst from Atkins to Cushman to help people get into town without driving

More sidewalks connecting neighborhoods

Slowing traffic, especially on residential streets that have become thoroughfares, such as Strong Street, Northwest and Southeast Streets, Pomeroy Lane, Shays Street, Potwine Lane, Bay Road, East Hadley Road, East Pleasant Street, Pine Street, etc.

[Suggests list of ways to lower automobile use, including location of homes in relation to services & other activities]

#### Town Center [including circulation]

*[Total 65. Includes more vibrancy, traffic management, sidewalks, types of shops & activities]*

Create a downtown focus: visually and culturally. [This may be the theater project, but also a bandstand on the common for concerts, etc.

Securing more real property by acquisition, zoning, and “use” restrictions to limit commercial domination of the center, and to preserve public use for the long run.

More vibrant downtown area

More downtown life for adults – e.g. movie theater and a grocery store

My daily life would be more enjoyable if I didn't need to drive to make a simple purchase: thus senior condos [or any condos] in Amherst Center would be good. The Town's senior housing is now all subsidized, thus a person who is able to afford the Clark House can no longer live there. It would be nice to be able to walk in Amherst Center with some stores! I go to Northampton to do that, since it has a variety of stores and a greater variety of restaurants, a great museum, two movie houses. [I know the Mead is close to Amherst Center, but it doesn't compare to the Smith in space.]

Downtown needs more variety – more clothing, shoes, housewares, movies [coming], foot traffic places for adults i.e. non-students.

Bringing stores back to the downtown so I could do all of my regular shopping downtown and didn't have to go to the mall except for big ticket items such as appliances

Have stores with useful, functional things like groceries and hardware in the town center.

Re-build the movie theater in the town center

The bringing to life of downtown Amherst, dependent on the completion of the Amherst Center for Stage and Screen, which should lead in turn to the creative reconfiguration of the urban space behind Hastings and the Jeffrey Amherst bookstore.

Fewer cars downtown

More variety of stores downtown

Some outdoor cafes, more reasons to go to center of town

A more attractive [less messy], vibrant downtown

Cleaner downtown side walks, cleaner air, cleaner cars, cleaner streets

It would be nice to see some area with playground equipment near the common.

Encourage the opening of downtown stores catering to everyday needs [grocery stores, hardware stores, etc.]. Then I would spend less time in my car going to large box stores

A downtown that is architecturally and commercially more attractive than it is. I consider North Pleasant Street, north of the juncture of Main and Amity, not small-town quaint, but downright ugly.

Downtown performing arts center

A revitalized downtown shopping area

More support of the town center – the *heart* of a real community

Lively businesses downtown

Having more stores downtown that sell basic necessities like food, clothing, etc.

Bring Louis back downtown – a *small*, good grocery store

Downtown organic grocery store which is affordable. A co-op would be ideal.

A serious food store in the center of town.

More downtown parking [off-street] allowing for the elimination of some on-street parking thus enabling a redesign of vehicle traffic flow [two through lanes North/South from one end to the other of downtown], bike lanes, and pedestrian ways to facilitate more efficient movement of traffic and people through the downtown. This could also have the effect of invigoration our downtown business community

Longer walk signals at the Amity/Main/North Pleasant Street intersection

Free parking, somewhere

Traffic calming measures; a still more pedestrian friendly downtown – a winter garden-arcade

Continued focus on a center that is friendly to pedestrians, bicycles, baby strollers, and handicapped persons

Get rid of the raised pedestrian crossings on Route 9 by Amherst College

Restore the parking spaces lost downtown to bumpouts, etc.

'Walking streets' in downtown area [as seen in walking streets in many European cities.]

A grocery store in downtown Amherst.  
 More places for people to walk with days of no cars downtown.  
 A hardware store in downtown Amherst  
 I'm excited about the Amherst Cinema project. I'd love to be able to go out to a movie in Amherst again.  
 A movie theater [as planned]  
 Outdoor cafes  
 Plant more shade trees on North Pleasant Street  
 A common place, setting in the downtown  
 A bandstand on the common. Not only would it restore part of Amherst's lost past, but it would provide a gathering place on the Common. Maybe Amherst could feel like my neighborhood occasionally. Band concerts in the summer would be wonderful. A bandstand could also provide public restrooms [probably below the performance floor], and also some space for the Information Booth. It could be a focal point for functions on the Common. ["If you get lost, meet us at the bandstand."] Also, it could provide power hookups to replace the ugly posts that serve that function now. The idea of a bandstand was defeated quite a few years ago, and I still hold a grudge about it. Perhaps it's time to raise the idea again.  
 Either quit regulating flags – or take down ads and posters from telephone poles once a month – or both.  
 Pedestrian-only mall in Amherst center  
 More attractive downtown area, especially backsides of businesses facing parking lot area  
 Creation of more efficient pedestrian way in town centre  
 Traffic flow Kellogg – parking lot – Main Street ONE WAY  
 Public transport security/shuttle to centre from "perimeter" parking  
 Bicycle access that is not pre-empted by double-parked beer trucks  
 Less parking so people will walk a few blocks  
 A more vibrant downtown. That would require more parking, some imaginative redesign and expansion of public spaces [e.g. a couple of new vest-pocket parks, less on-street parking allowing widened sidewalks with more benches and trees], more downtown cultural offerings [e.g. the original vision of the Amherst Center for Stage and Screen, including a covered atrium for convivial schmoozing in cold weather,], and a more robust and diversified business community  
 Crosswalk marked from parking lot to library.  
 Same hours for parking in Parking Garage and lot as at meters.  
 More attractive downtown with a wider range of things to do there.  
 Encourage the development of downtown – including shutting off Main Road to traffic to encourage businesses to locate there such as grocery store  
 A larger, more varied business district. Shopping in malls is the pits, and our downtown needs a real boost.  
 More parking  
 Put the "No turn on red" sign at the corner of Amity and North Pleasant [facing BOA] in a more visible place  
 A *real* study of the traffic lights in the center of town with an eye to making the movement of traffic more efficient.  
 Keep all the fliers off light poles and paint the new ones black again. Bus stops & poster kiosks are enough!  
 There must be a police presence in the downtown at all times, not because of any "crime waves", but rather as a deterrent to certain kinds of behavior.

[Reduce numbers of] speedy drivers with cell phones, extraordinarily high noise volumes from cars, not stopping for pedestrian  
[Reduce] litter in the streets. [Here the businesses must be more attentive. We need more and better-looking garbage cans.  
An impossible request: get rid of those pillars on the Bank of America. An eye-sore. How did that happen?

#### Services, costs, taxes

*[Total: 53. Includes specific service requests, lower taxes, change tax system]*

Reduce government waste – especially the purchase of new vehicles and unnecessary equipment.

Provide substantial incentive to save energy.

Wouldn't spend \$800,000 on one soccer field

Our growth not outpace our income

Improve schools

Improve schools – this doesn't mean more money

Municipal energy utilities

Municipal high speed internet

More realistic financial participation in the municipal life and needs of the town, and the demands that large, young, student residents put place upon the taxpayers and resources of the town, in lieu of participation in taxations. [Actual contribution to the day to day demands to fund routine municipal expenses, not just capital contributions.]

Math and science should be equal to or above the arts in the school curriculum

Better financial planning at the schools. Our schools have not had the tight, coordinated spending that other school system have, or that municipal governments have, and we pay for it in our taxes. It seems to me that the Finance Director for the town government should be equally involved in the school finances. I'm [more than] guessing that there is much to be saved there.

More active demands on state governance to base taxation primarily on income rather than on primary dwelling dollar values.

Lower property taxes

To get more and better access to programs for seniors, disabled, and special needs education plus more art programs at the school

Have the Library open to 9 P.M. every night

Outdoor community skating rink

More swimming places in the summer

On-going investment in community facilities, e.g. libraries, parks, soccer fields, etc.

Have the middle and high school start later in the morning

Some town employees need to realize that they are employed by the people they serve.

Regulations covering pedestrians and bicyclists need to be published and rules need to be enforced by penalties.

Emphasize quality of life services: restore all bus line sidewalk clearing, leaf removal, improve trash removal, set 6 day access to the dump/transfer station, have convenient hazardous waste collection, and have extremely comprehensive trash and debris removal from residential areas.

Better lighting after dark.

Increase the range of services and hours in main and branch libraries

Have more open hours at all of the libraries

If taxes weren't so high. Mine over almost \$7,000, and I'm living on a very limited income @ 82years of age.

Slower rise in property taxes so that elderly can afford to stay here.



Progressive tax system [higher state taxes with the increase going to cities and towns], legislation to allow property taxes to exempt the first \$150,000 of assessed value, Town meeting finding way to join forces with other towns [Lexington, Brookline] to become a political force in the state

A town community center that serves all generations

No or lower fee to use landfill

Stop tax increases/seniors being forced out

A better balance in taxation. Our residential taxes are very high. In spite of this, town government is perpetually in a funding crisis. We need to find other sources of revenue.

We must get a solution for our budgetary “structural deficit”. One avenue worth exploring is more high density housing for people not likely to have children. This sort of development increases the tax base but does not increase the education budget, our largest municipal expense. We must not drive away low and middle income persons.

A community center that could offer teenagers activities

A new park with water

Lower Town Manager’s salary by about \$30,000, and consider raises every two years instead of annually

Fund the Police Department more generously

A reevaluation of the police force. I am aware of much racial profiling affecting students and residents, we need to look at that. Also, do we really need so many police? Some of the laws are unfair and biased, for example the zero tolerance policy on noise complaints gives students no opportunity to quiet down, many of which do not realize how loud they are being would gladly quiet down. This policy I feel is just a way to get money out of students and is unjust. I have friends who have been effected by this and have low-incomes and would not intentionally be a disturbance. Not all students are out of control party animals, and the people I know were wrongly fined but did not have the money to fight the charges. There are other policies which must be reevaluated as well.

A more progressive system of local taxation than property taxes. E.g., the ideal would be a statutory basis for local, progressive taxation of both income and net worth. This would enable us to maintain and expand town facilities, services, and amenities that make the town great.

Increased recreational facilities for all ages

I dislike having my property taxes going to pay for thousands of dollars in damages inflicted by end of semester UMass parties. If we do have to spend it, I’d rather spend it on prevention – such as a large police presence at the usual places [as was done at Hobart Lane several years ago]

Redesign Amherst schools so that they educate people of all ages every day and night

The creation and development of a municipal affordable co-housing and small business development fund.

An emphasis on trees. We should plan new trees in every available space in the town. We should replace trees as they die. We should stop the electric utility from turning beautiful trees into “donuts” simply to accommodate their wires. WE should have a Town Nursery . . maybe a real Arboretum.

Develop more recreational [Active!] space. Less than 1% of town is rec.

A dog park [socializing opportunity, owners responsible for cleaning up after their own dogs, just need open space, a fence with a double gate, some benches for dog owners, a water source for both pets and owners, and some shade]

Making Ruxton gravel pit into a dog playground. This may take the dogs off the trails and public parks.

Soccer/recreational fields for kids and adults

Skateboard park

Eliminate the dumping fees, so people won’t dump trash on public roads.

Keep the landfill open every day

Replace the streetlights that were removed in fiscal crisis some years ago. It is really dark on Tracy Circle, etc.

Longer hours for library, public pools, parks, and buses

Better control on Town spending – including spending on an Amherst Master or Comprehensive Plan

### Business/Employment

*[Total: 34. Includes desired types of businesses, employment, tax base]*

Different zoning for more home base businesses.

More good restaurants

Reduce the anti-business attitude

Tourism should be promoted to encourage more commercial viability. There is so much to do here and now that Hadley [of course] has built more motels, there is more lodging available.

Become more business friendly

More local jobs for professionals

Stop protecting more land and encourage commercial viability

Encourage tourism to bring in outside money

Living wages for non-professionals

\$1 lattes

More business hiring

An understanding that some forms of *new economic development* are vital to keep our town fiscally sound and open to people from many backgrounds. Rapid tax increases in recent years are moving Amherst into an “elite” town category. Do we want to continue in this direction? I hope not. Amherst should seriously explore and seek out companies and/or professional associations that will *add to our revenue stream*.

A first-rate men’s store

Introduction of “staple” retail and business to all village center areas [including grocery, small scale general stores, video rental, bank, coffee shop, etc.]

Creation of jobs

Be a little less snobby about what kinds of business are encouraged in town. WE can surely tolerate something besides banks and food!

Significant economic development to reduce the burden on the residential tax base and user fees

Municipal ownership of commercial property – rents at cost for helping new business start-ups.

More retail mix in town.

Greater variety of businesses; non-college-UMass cultural activities

Implement laws that prevent chain stores from opening and driving local business out

Bigger variety of local shops, especially a green grocer in town

Basic stores to make the malls obsolete

Keep chain stores out

I would like to place my small business in an affordable location. Other than that I quite enjoy daily life here.

A local movie house soon!

A movie theater

The new movie theater open!

We need to plan so that we encourage much greater diversity among businesses.

Attract “high tech” business [related to UMass spinoffs. Need to expand tax base

Job in town instead of 20 mile commute

7 day a week emergency medical care hospital without having to cross the bridge

A “museum” or trade establishment

Local produce available in town every day or most days of the week

### Community life

*[Total: 26. Includes desired interactions among people, suggested community activities, press]*

Slow down/relax the pace

Help bring 2 segments of Amherst together: low income & working class, and upper class. These are 2 very different worlds.

Greater interaction among the various people and groups in town

A greater sense of respect of community life – that is, *we are all in this town together and we can cooperate with each other*. Jaywalking and other actions of disregard in Amherst Center are examples of *lack of community spirit*.

It is particularly difficult for many low-income residents of Amherst to become involved in so many of the things that the more privileged residents are able to do. Whether it be involvement in the schools, local politics, or other crucial areas of involvement. I have never been made to feel that my input or advice was wanted. I haven't felt a sense of inclusion with the more privileged parents of Amherst since arriving here 10 years ago. I would like to see a genuine effort by the privileged to reach out and ask, "Can we help you, and what's the best way to do that?"

People need continuous community formation education just to be more open & smile & greet newcomers into their lives sincerely. They need continuous community formation education just to say what is really on their minds diplomatically. And they need continuous community formation education just to recognize their inner angers & learn to discharge them quietly without threatening anyone. All this will greatly reduce mistrust and build new trust.

Less hyper "music" & drinking, drugging

Get a fair and balanced newspaper/newsletter

A non-profit daily newspaper alternative to the Gazette.

Stop distributing a free newspaper. Then I could ignore most of the things I dislike about Amherst.

Change the layout of Amherst Chamber of Commerce website so that it is more user-friendly and visually easy to read. Or make a new website that compiles all area events. The point is better advertisement of happenings.

A reduced general tendency for micromanaging every aspect of Town life.

Enforce noise regulations/parties of young adults

Light up the Amherst night concentrating on outdoor floodlighting of well-designed landmarks. And keep stores and other attractions open 'til 10 P.M.

The communitization of critical goods and services: bulk purchases of electricity, oil, gas, prescription medications, telephone, cable, etc.

More places for teenagers to go outside of school-based activities.

Repeal the regulation making it illegal to tie up dogs in town. This has definitely has a negative impact on my daily routines.

Lots more interaction across age-groups and across ethnic, racial, and socio-economic groups, etc.

To try to move some of the activities from the commons to North-Southeast residential areas to encourage walk to events to see neighbors rather than the more anonymous commons

Winter carnivals and community events; everything seems to be based in the spring and summer. How about snow sculpture contests? A ski-a-thon?

Locate organized events at places other than the Town Common, perhaps on school grounds.

Increase community interaction with neighborhood associations

An arts and community café where we can meet and eat and have art and political forums everyday!

Please respond!

I do not want Amherst to try to emulate Northampton

A local website like Montague has [see MontagueMa.net]. It allows people to network about local resources, issues, events, etc.

An emphasis on keeping Amherst clear: a “Let’s keep the litter where it belongs” campaign and philosophy

### Colleges/University

*[Total: 18. Includes Town/institutions cooperation, behavior, costs]*

Closer collaboration with UMass on controlling student behavior

Encourage more cooperation between UMass, Amherst, and other communities to work together on regional problems such as housing, schools, transportation, police, and fire response. Consolidation our resources, and sharing costs may be more efficient than our present system.

Change in alcoholic environment of the student population – fewer bars

More payments in lieu of taxes from colleges

Coerce UMass into housing more students on campus [The town controls their water.]

Town/gown partnership

Legislative aid to require closer collaboration of UMass and the town, especially fire and police.

UMass students should have vibrant communities around co-housing style student housing. Private developments can offset this too.

Ban cars for freshmen [and sophomores?] at UMass

More considerate college students

Better management of the impacts from college students – housing, traffic, parties, etc.

Foster real long-term cooperation between the town and the colleges – not just rhetoric

Minimize students who can have cars! Students would be inspired to be more a part of the Amherst community if they weren’t so car-dependent.

Coordination of University and to a lesser extent the Colleges’ calendar and schedules so as to make reasonable use of all town facilities and commercial interests, traffic, and conduct of young people.

Develop an agreement between the Town of Amherst and the University of Massachusetts in regard to mutual behavioral expectations on the behalf of both residents and students

Improve relationship between UMass and town residents, and UMass and adjacent town neighborhoods.

[For me to go] to a University that actually values diversity in all of its forms, and respects student autonomy, as well as being economically accessible to any resident.

More affordable housing for students and low-income people [not all of us students have mommy and daddy paying our bills]

### Housing

*[Total: 16. Includes cost and types of homes]*

To be able to rent an appropriate home for me and my family that is affordable and not a nesting ground for drugs and abuse.

Perhaps build another Clark House exclusively for elderly.

Affordable housing should not be concentrated too much.

More co-housing; more affordable housing

Affordable housing and affordable education that would include all people

Develop affordable housing

Not putting in any more low housing [sic] in North Amherst and not in more condominiums [sic].

The reduction of building MacMansions

Limit/enforce the number of residents in dwellings

Encourage affordable housing – prevent gentrification

To have a master plan which deals with housing in the future. I do not believe we have even a slight plan now

I do not want Amherst to go the gentrification route which ends up with “ticky-tacky” rather than authenticity.

Diversity in affordable housing for all generations

Keeping a mix of residential properties [no large projects]

More affordable housing: resist the demand forces that drive up costs, system of supportive housing to allow town employees to live in Amherst

Limit large house developments

#### Town Government & community decision-making

*[Total: 18]*

I think having a selectboard or council voted on by districts or combined precincts would make life in Amherst better. One could easily contact a person representing one’s district to let concerns be known. In the current system they could all be from N. Amherst, with little knowledge of problems in the rest of the town. But, nothing a master can do about that.

Reduce various complicated rules, regulations, codes, restrictions, etc.

Findings a way to lessen polarization and anger, and to build listening skills and consensus. Too often we end up with far from ideal solutions because of “my way or no way” attitudes, instead of trying to work out creative compromises that will satisfy most people

If we had a better group of persons running the town. The Select Board is not able to make good/knowledgeable decisions. We need a mayor who is not connected to everyone.

Greatly shortened Town Meetings [i.e., spring Town Meeting should run for 5 evening maximum], allowing a much wider range of people to chose to participate. As it now stands, the Charter battle became a self-fulfilling prophecy, in that Town Meeting membership does not at present faithfully represent the diversity of opinion in town. I say that as someone who actively opposed the Charter.

Cooperation among differing parties in town politics

I don’t know how, but could we find a way to get past the constant NIMBY. We need to regain a sense of community – if we ever had one.

A new building commissioner

A mayor

Revision of our rather clumsy governance to one that is more representative and that recognizes that Amherst has become a complex corporation that needs leadership greater than that provided by 2 committees [that is, the Select Board and Town Meeting]

A less divisive atmosphere in town politics.

Citizens would be open to listening to other sides of issues rather than dig in heels and argue: aim for understanding rather than winning

Listen to criticism non-defensively

Bring both sides of issue to the table; collegiality among agreed-upon issues not the same as among people from all sides

I don’t think major changes are needed. Perhaps, when a new Town Manager is appointed, the distinction between her/his responsibilities [management] and those of the elected officials [governing] should be more strongly emphasized and maintained. The former tends to erode the latter over time.

Have a better and more responsive type of government. I appreciate the strong participatory nature of Town Meeting, but also feel it has serious problems in its current form. Also the town needs

improved links and feedback between Town Meeting, town committees, the Select Board, and town staff. The system that exists now needs help

After this past series of Town Meetings, I could wish for a community that placed more value on the public good. It feels to me as if the Town is fragmenting into interest groups. If I felt that there were more support for the public good [i.e. the Plum Brook recreation area] and less for private convenience [i.e. the proposed Hope Church land taking], daily life in this town would be for me more enjoyable.

[Presents list of ways to improve attitude toward property owners, fair application of laws and rules, conduct of public discussions]

#### Pace, location, & type of development

*[Total: 7]*

Reduced development

Architectural Review Board that has teeth

OSCD is good idea if resulting development is worth of this community

Stricter zoning enforcement

Develop village centers

How would you support the growth of town centers [i.e. Atkins]?

In general, more village centers development. Improving and *slightly* expanding commercial districts to allow for more patronage via walking, bicycling [less trips south on Route 9!]

#### Natural resource and open space protection

*[Total: 5]*

To have the wildlife, plants, animals, and trees protected from destructive kids and adults

Protect hillsides from development

Elimination of the periodic smell of fuel oil from Tan Brook

Keeping open space interspersed with the residential

Control development to maintain rural nature

#### Other

*[Total: 13. Includes satisfied]*

Better nighttime reception for radio 1430 AM [I'm a night owl!]

Actually, I think things are pretty good the way they are!

I am satisfied

We are very happy here – growing old gracefully. I really don't know of any significant change. We are in good health and enjoy our church work and civic group activities and enjoy the offerings [of?] institutions

[Less complaining?!]

Very superficial question. On a daily level it is fine. I am not looking for a perfect life.

Reduce illegal drug traffic

Fewer mosquitoes

Better protection of neighborhood integrity

“All roads” to lead to Amherst

Allocate outer marker for Westover AFB so that planes don't go over any house and rest of town

[Adopt practices to counter global warming, see example of Portland, Oregon]

I think we need to address state and federal government along with town *[illegible]* for us to continue to be successful

No answer

*[Total: 6]*

### Additional Comments?

Response cluster	# Responses	Starts on page . . .
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#### Traffic/transportation/circulation *[Total 7]*

My daughter says – no student cars in town, let them walk.

Amherst must have meaningful dialog with Hadley about what is happening on Route 9

I hope that we can keep our dentists *and* doctors closer to the center of town. We need to keep people walking, *not* driving.

Another important change would be to improve and expand the current sidewalk network. Many *[illegible]* sidewalks need to be repaired and upgraded, including for ADA compliance and for safety; and other areas need to have sidewalks installed.

I'd love to restore the trolley that ran from North Amherst to the center of town. . . and perhaps to extend it to Atkins's Corner. I'd like another major east-west street near the center of Town.

AESTHETIC definition to "Entering Amherst" [i.e. University Drive/Route 9, Pelham Road/College Street] – UNIFIED GATEWAY: gate/sculpture/signage, etc.

Interestingly, Amherst rarely allows right turn on red lights as is common in other communities.

Amherst's intersection upgrades should construct dual lanes to provide for a specific right turn lane.

Motion activated or flow-controlled signaling might be instituted.

Town services, costs & taxes [Total 11]

How about leaf pick-up again

Amherst should join with other sympathetic communities to create buying cooperatives for the benefit of all citizens.

Put streetlights back on. Some people are paying to keep one on.

Keep supporting social service network. Roy Rosenblatt is very knowledgeable and does a good job linking people to work together in human services

I'd like to restore the fall leaf-pickup, and make it more efficient and timely. I'd like a major town-wide emphasis on composting, like the new effort at UMass [It's GREAT compost!]

I was startled earlier this year when a demographic document was distributed. Actually, I was more than startled to discover how many employees of the town and the school district are being supported by this really very small community. How do we do that?

While education is obviously our highest priority in Amherst, we must recognize that we have limited resources; therefore, we must be careful not to place it at a level so high that it seriously compromises the Town's ability to provide Police, Fire, DPW, and Town Hall administrative and financial services, all of which are critical and key to the functioning of the Town as a whole.

I truly feel Amherst should not be subsidizing other towns. Hadley tax rate is \$13+ and ours is almost \$20, and they don't even get an ambulance or home fire fighters.

To pay for good schools property taxes are needed. Amherst is a town that will always predominantly depend on home taxation. This is perhaps the most inequitable tax there is. Property tax is on assessed value each year. Investment taxes are assessed only when the investment is sold. It does not effect my taxes if my stocks greatly increase in value, in that they are only taxed at their sale, when the profit is realized. There is also no progressive part to property taxes. All of the house value is taxed at the same rate, the first \$100,000 at the same rate as the million dollar value. There is no free exemption for lower income homes [and presumably lower income residents].

New schools, school or facilities expansion must be anticipated. One undeniable certainty is today's births will be entering kindergarten in 5 years. Knowing the potential birthrate impact in 5 years upon the schools imposes an unexcusable duty on the community to have in service the necessary educational facilities.

[Regarding cost burden of essential public services] Will the burden be sustainable under unfavorable economic conditions? Will the unequal and excessive burden result in citizen revolt and dramatic unplanned budget reductions [decreases in spending?] should home equity diminish or grow below expectation, will downward assessments be required? Will the town be unable to capture lost revenue, to respond logically to tax revenue interruptions or to terminate commitments to revenue expenditures impartially and equitably sufficient to appease aggrieved taxpayers?

Business [including Town Center] [Total 13]

Prior Master Plans [several] have not addressed a viable business plan. Please don't suggest businesses pay more taxes one more time because Amherst is anti-business and needs to change its attitude.

Just look at the fiasco taking place with the Hope Church.

Finances in Amherst are a major concern – zoning changes friendlier to business, less NIMBY'ism, and increasing the taxbase while maintaining the feel of Amherst are all critical.

I would look to review permitting procedures for businesses to make sure their experiences are not so arduous that business owners stay away from locating here.

No expansion of businesses in town center. It should be called complete, has come to its limit.

It has been very helpful to have a branch of Cooley Dickinson Hospital on this side of the river.

My son says – make Antonio's larger

We need business, commercial tax base to help offset the cost of keeping [open space assets].



I am very impressed with Chamber of Commerces' new look – brochure, etc. New restaurants i.e. Albert need encouragement. Zanna's and others doing a good job.

I think there is an attitude on the part of the stores downtown that if they don't get what they think they should have, TM and the general population is against them. I believe this is lacking in real community thought, and emphasizes quick fixes.

A strong town center requires good access [including adequate parking], a variety of businesses and services.

Amherst should encourage the redevelopment of downtown to accommodate more small business.

Some way must be found to attract business so that the tax base is broadened. If things continue as they are now, many of us will find it difficult to remain in Amherst.

[Where will future business and commercial enterprises be located] to provide employment options, income alternatives, diversity in work type and upward mobility; to provide services and products necessary for daily living; to enrich and broaden the revenue stream essential in maintaining public services and facilities; to encourage and promote diversity of entrepreneurial enterprises as much as it accommodates and supports diversity in its population.

### Community life [Total 12]

More intergenerational social activities. Young people need safe places to go.

I like being in Amherst and enjoy its liberal feistiness [although I do disagree with the West Side Story decision].

The banners across the street near the Common give the town a friendly welcoming feelings. I disagree with the sentiments of one or two and just ignore them – everyone is entitled to a different opinion.

Amherst is a good place to live, but somewhat insular, self important, and preachy.

[In regard to welcoming retiring citizens to remain in Amherst.] Typically retirees use the community facilities and commercial institutions at hours non-competitive with non-retirees. Retirees tend to generously support and attend the cultural arts. At some point, retirees prefer housing that provides all services and maintenance. Housing stock of retirees who enter 55+ community re-enters the market. Retirees require few tax-payer supported services and are tax revenue “cash cows”. Florida and other over-55 havens recognize the state tax benefits of retirees bequests, and some of that revenue recirculates to Amherst. Many retirees winter elsewhere to avoid winter's difficulties and traffic congestion.

Change is a function of life and cannot be avoided. I hope that future planning will take account of such matters as global warming, green space, recreation, public transportation, universally accessible high speed communication and a pace of living that is less frenetic and urgent. Incorporate all citizens into the useful life of Amherst; most particularly use the resources of old citizens, enrich the lives of all by providing the elements of community.

I respect myself and teach my family to respect themselves as well as other life [all life], not just humans. I love Amherst. I was proud and happy to move here. Now I am angry that I can't afford to move out of Village Park to a better place. I am on the verge of a nervous breakdown, and I am beginning to hate the politics of Amherst. No one really cares about anything but MONEY!

I would like to see Amherst become “livable” for the working middle class, especially public service employees. If not, we risk becoming a “cute” relic of the past, rather than a diverse multi-able population that will keep Amherst vital.

I am a town meeting member of Amherst and a student here. I have only been in Amherst a short time, but I love this town very much. It offers so much to so many. I love the acceptance and celebration of our differences here, and all of the opportunities for growth mentally, spiritually, socially, and so on. Transferring to UMass was one of the best things I have ever done. This is a wonderful change

from my hometown in southern Massachusetts, [here] the differences in people and ideas are respected and celebrated, and there is a safer space to be an individual and to explore.

I live in trepidation that Amherst has become too upscale and will continue on the path of encouraging the wealthy to live here. I'd hate to see, as we see in society in general, the middle class population diminishing.

I wish every neighborhood could be like Dana Street.

I would like to see an image of Amherst as the heart of the valley, of the 5 College area, a town which stands out as a truly active political and cultural place, where diversity, grassroots empowerment, and small town government are values, not problems, and where people understand environmental sustainable ethics. I would like to see an "iconic" image of a town where others come to learn, not merely wait for "experts" to lead us to adapt to the inevitable.

#### Colleges & University [Total 4]

Harmonization of University and Town planning and development, avoiding dumping thousands of undergraduates on local housing market, affecting quality of life in neighborhoods throughout town. I've been here since 1967 and I think we have to "integrate" more with the students and ask them to treat us as if we were their mother or sister. In return we shouldn't be too quick to judge.

I think a master plan for Amherst would also need to address and help navigate the various positive and negative aspects of having 2 small colleges and 1 giant university in our town.

Related to Amherst housing costs are the plans for the expansion of UMass. Projections are for there to be an increased student enrollment by 10 – 20%. Eventually there will be dormitory construction, but initially the increased student presence will need to be housed in town. This will increase the cost of housing in Amherst both in rental units and the buying of condominiums for investment, allowing high rents as students are able to share rooms in ways that would be uncomfortable for families. My son lives in a four bedroom house in Cambridge that he shares with 6 other young adults. It is the only way they can afford Cambridge rental prices.

#### Housing [Total 8]

We need to stop building these McMansions and build at least 100 units of affordable housing. This would diversify our population, both racially and ECONOMICALLY.

Need to encourage construction of housing for moderate incomes.

Amherst should actively promote and/or develop co-housing. It should not be left up to for-profit developers.

Initially I would like to subscribe to the recent column by Elisa Campbell. My following comments are neither as carefully thought out nor as carefully written as hers. Any master plan which uses the term affordable housing will be trash ready. My desires are perhaps not widely shared or legal, but there goals might be shared by others if they were ever to have been proposed. Or they might have been finally rejected. A master plan should include consideration of housing subsidies for a number of years for new employees being recruited to make their initial home in Amherst. Instead of just talking about diversity we might give the recruiting agency some new clout and having an initial identification to our town. We talk about older residents who cannot afford to remain in Amherst homes they have lived in for years because of increasing taxes. How many of them are there? How can we respond to them while not placing them in a pseudo welfare appeal track? Is there any possible way in which we can make the transition from hoe to town resident a possibility for our young people at least have a chance to live in their home town? Finally, there is the possibility that we not do anything, and state law will open the door to high rise "affordable housing" which will not be responsive to our town. Any master plan which addresses any of the above issues will provoke a discussion which is necessary to a real "Master Plan."

We need rent control and some way to keep real estate speculation down!

Amherst, the home of the Commonwealth's flagship campus, needs to recognize and provide for the University's growth in student housing and related services. Denial is not an option. In *Zuckerman v. Hadley* the Massachusetts SJC ruled in part that a community must not act in such a manner as to transfer the burden of housing to other communities.

Currently growth in Amherst means \$750,000 homes on 1.5 acres in South Amherst, with two car garages, no kids flooding the schools, higher taxes, all white faces. That's just fine if folks are content with the fact that over the next 20 years the diversity supposedly so dear to residents slowly disappears. Affordable housing is not \$200,000 in tax money to provide 12 units to low-income families. Affordable housing is an integral part of a plan for growth.

A major issue in town is the cost of housing. We are in danger of becoming an exclusive high priced community and find our diversity decreasing, especially in regard to income. Already our town employees, teachers, police and fire fighters, and lower town administrative staff often live in other towns because they are not able to afford Amherst home prices. Given the investment doldrums in the stock market, many Americans are buying real estate as investment. This is a serious problem in that it competes with people needing to purchase their only property, the one they wish to live in and raise their families. Towns with good schools especially face this problem. There is great demand in housing for towns that have good schools. In many communities including Amherst, people with modest income must spend in excess of 50% of their income on housing in order to provide good schools for their children. This often requires parents to work too many hours, ironically decreasing the quality of family life. Our two most important assets, good schools and open spaces, tend to drive up the demand for housing. In a time of rising housing prices there are great profits to be made to develop and build more houses. More profit also comes by building larger homes with large floor space, that command higher prices. The magna-mansion phenomena is of course found not only in Amherst but throughout the US. These homes are usually out of scale, aesthetically not very pleasing. Families are decreasing in size and houses are increasing in size.

#### Town government & decision-making [Total 7]

In general, I like a SMALLER government, i.e. LESS government controlled or regulated things and MORE freedom for the society and individuals.

Everyone in this town has an opinion or a complaint which does interfere with progress and change. It seems that there is a very small vocal contingent that pushes through its agenda regardless of how much impact decisions will have on taxes.

Our town government is not keeping up with the times. Too many narrow interests. Too many committees with too many reports that are too difficult to keep up with.

I'm impressed by the responsiveness and quality of the Amherst town government.

Why is our Town Manager essentially tenured when hired? A five year initial contract would certainly be adequate and would permit review. 23 years is a long time to wait for someone's retirement.

One problem in Amherst from my point of view is the apparent lack of civility in public discourse.

More arguments are won on emotion than fact. The voters elect Select Board, however Town officials appoint Conservation Commissioners, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Farm Committee members, albeit with consent. Little excuse exists for failing to recruit competent, impartial and conscientious members. Various segments of the community perceive that the present composition of municipal bodies is based upon a uniformity of opinion and has been knowingly constructed to create the false veneer of diversity. Promoters risk considerable money and commit personal effort to complying with rules and ordinances imposed by municipal body members who appear to ignore the economics and dynamics of financial risk, of lender requirements, of timely development and of incurred liabilities. Access to municipal files, data bases, documents, plans,

maps, electronic information, and mailing services should be provided all Town Meeting members, individuals, special interest groups, or petitioners on an equal basis and without partiality or bias. Otherwise the municipality will be perceived endorsing and advantaging one set of interests to the detriment and disadvantage of another set of interests.

#### Pattern of development/Growth management [Total 6]

Don't let developers fractionate land. Make them provide comprehensive places for entire areas not just individual lots.

What about the water supply – can we limit growth based on this and on the ability of the soil to take care of filtering sewage?

I vote for greater development in already developed areas; downtown should have stores [first level], offices [second level] and apartments [third level].

It is a given that this town will grow and change. While I want to preserve all the good things we have – amazing schools, open space, great services – I don't want to see us stuck in a preservationist mind-set.

“Growth” is a euphemism for collective obesity, employed by business people who hope to sell something to the fatsos.

Non taxable or minimal taxed proposals receive special expedited preferences and/or comprehensive permitting processes that are unavailable to projects based on traditional development techniques. The extraordinary capricious and differing preferences constitute an unacknowledged bias and partiality to the nature of ownership, rather than on use and the benefit or liability to the community's services or citizens.

#### Open Space and views

The views of mountains & open working farmland are assets we must not lose.

#### CPC Committee, Master Plan, and process [Total 19]

Glad to be a citizen of Amherst. Looking forward to participating in this process.

I'd be glad to participate more deeply, if desired.

Master Plan: GO FOR IT!!!

Some of the most important topics are probably: planning for the population increases, encouraging different kinds and missing of housing/developments, identifying land for schools and other future municipal needs, making the town feel/be more inclusive, what are acceptable trade-offs and what can't we afford/do. [Good luck with the ones who will want to freeze Amherst as it is, flaws and all, andy plan as long as it doesn't involve real change.]

Thanks

Amherst needs to realize why it has grown in the past and why it will continue to grow in the future.

Decisions based on fear have never provided enlightened, thoughtful outcomes.

I know we need overall planning. We are doing it piecemeal in the present.

As this process moves forward I would anticipate enormous pressures from many ideological and economically driven interests. Many of these should be dismissed if their roots and the origin of their urgings are not found in facts and observable in Amherst. There are those who would extend the conceptual boundaries of Amherst until the point is reached where their position is validated. In the extreme we will be told that because certain practices will [supposedly] benefit the planet, they must be realized in Amherst. There are those who will seek to have their deeply held political ideologies reflected in the new comprehensive plan. And there are those who will promote a view of economics and demographics such that an aggressive program of development, both housing and

commercial, will be essential. All positions must be moderated. The test of Amherst should be Amherst. Amherst is not Cambridge, or Bolder CO, or Berkeley CA.

Thank you for having this forum. I hope the plan keeps Amherst as a forward thinking town that demonstrates successful community through even risky choices. I fear being forced to move if things continue this way. . . resource exhaustion is imminent; people are more disconnected. Think. It would be extremely wise for our citizens to understand the degree to which our current local bylaws and regulations protect our surroundings – and the extent to which they do NOT. Amherst has gone through many cyclical reincarnations. However, with *less time* between those cyclical reincarnations – the need for continual comprehensive master planning activities is here and now. We need to have an initial Master Plan that covers all of the basic requirements of state law. But beyond that, we need to have continual planning activities that are affordable, with a capacity to be included in the overall schema of governmental operations.

I hope the committee will carefully examine the recommendations of previous master plan proposals. I hope this master plan will be sensible, and have more effect than all the previous ones

Thank you for the work the committee is doing

We are not sure that a “Master Plan” will help very much. Sometimes, like pilots on a steamboat, we must travel from point to point as best we can, and there’s always a context – public memory, a caring public.

I would like to see Town Meeting have general oversight of the creation and evolution of the comprehensive plan, rather than turn it over to the Planning Board. This would keep more people in touch with it and provide further stimulus for participation in TM.

I believe a “successful” “responsive” master plan is vital to the town – we shouldn’t miss this opportunity with a report which is DOA.

I would like this process to educate citizens about [1] the negative consequences of a LACK of a master plan [i.e. the status quo], and [2] fiscal projections for next 10 years.

Thank you for asking. Thank you for serving on the CPC

Good luck to you.. . . Try hard. Be modest

#### Other [Total 7]

Much like Springfield, Amherst is rich in a cultured past set in history; however, unlike Springfield’s wish to attract visitor attention, Amherst’s influx of visitors populate the patronage generation, so catering to their status will further propel the town into a destinational mainstay.

The comprehensive planning process should not be used as a delay tactic – i.e. there are many actions that should have occurred since the SB signed onto the Cities for Climate Protection. The Comprehensive Plan should not cause further delay.

The questions here are a C+ questionnaire.

Many of the goal for a long term comprehensive plan will e somewhat dependent on our seeing the connection between our town and all the towns and cities in America. Unless we find ways to “fix America”, we will be seriously restrained from meeting some of our goals. As we think and plan for our future in Amherst, we need to find ways to share the bounty, and build for healthy towns and cities everywhere.

Is there anything we can do to reduce air pollution coming from the south?

I think I’ve said it all – for now.

Change the name of the town – considering Jeffrey Amherst intentionally infected Native Americans with blankets [contaminated with small pox]

I’d like to see large trees [the new elms?] on North Pleasant Street instead of those dinky crabapples.

“I was gratified to be able to answer promptly. I said I don’t know.” Mark Twain.